

Washington, DC - As Homeland Security Secretary Janet Napolitano testifies about aviation security on Capitol Hill today, Rep. Bruce Braley (D-Iowa) sent a letter urging her to implement the *Protect the Lives of Americans Now through Enhanced Screening* (PLANES) Act now, rather than waiting for the bill to proceed through Congress. Braley introduced the *PLANES Act* last week in response to the Christmas Day attack on Flight 253.

"I'm looking forward to working with you and my colleagues in Congress to implement the *PLANES Act* and to significantly enhance the safety of American travelers," Braley wrote to Napolitano. "As we consider possible legislation in Congress, I respectfully urge you to incorporate the important provisions in the *PLANES Act* into your ongoing efforts to enhance aviation security. I also respectfully request that you provide me with information on your current plans to rapidly deploy and enhance the use of explosives detection technologies both in the United States and abroad, including any available information on the potential to use the explosives trace detection technology currently used for screening carryon baggage to also screen passengers.

"I believe we can do more to ensure that all domestic flights and U.S.-bound international flights are protected from terrorist attacks while also upholding Americans' civil rights. I believe we must ensure that all U.S. airports and all international airports with flights to the United States have access to and are using the most effective explosives detection technology available to protect the lives of American passengers."

[Read the full text of the letter here.](#)

The *PLANES ACT* would strengthen aviation security by implementing the following measures:

- **Requiring the Secretary of Homeland Security to report to Congress on the use of explosives detection technologies**, including whole-body imaging technologies, explosive trace detection technologies, and canine explosives detection teams - including the effectiveness and privacy concerns and protections of the technologies - in aviation security.

- **Requiring the Secretary of Homeland Security to report on the potential use of explosives trace detection technologies - such as swabbing - for passenger screening.** While this technology is available at U.S. airports for screening carryon baggage, Braley is interested to know if it could also be used to effectively screen passengers for explosives, through swabbing a passenger's hand or shirt sleeve, for example.

- **Requiring the Secretary of Homeland Security to submit a plan to Congress to**

rapidly increase and enhance the use of explosives detection technologies for screening cargo, passenger baggage, and passengers for *all* domestic flights and international flights bound for the U.S.

· **Requiring the Secretary of Homeland Security to submit a plan to ensure that explosives detection technologies are rapidly deployed and used in a way that ensures protection for international flights bound for the U.S. that is *at least as strong as for domestic flights.***

This provision is incredibly important because, even though the major aviation-related terrorist plots since 9/11 have focused on international flights, effective explosives trace detection technologies are not widely deployed or used at foreign airports

· **Requiring that every U.S. commercial service airport has available at least one canine explosives detection team**, and that a sufficient number of canine explosives detection teams are deployed to ensure 100 percent screening of air cargo, as required by the *Implementing Recommendations of the 9/11 Commission Act of 2007*

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